

# *Procurement in Fairfax County*



## *...A Guide for Business*

Prepared by the Department of Purchasing and Supply  
Management

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# FAIRFAX COUNTY

## DEPARTMENT OF PURCHASING & SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 427  
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-0013

[www.co.fairfax.va.us/dpsm](http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/dpsm)

V I R G I N I A

Telephone: (703) 324-3201 Fax: (703) 324-3228 TTY 1-800-828-1140

Dear Vendor:

I would like to thank you for your interest in doing business with Fairfax County. We have developed this *Guide* as a source for you to become familiar with how Fairfax County procures its goods and services and how you can sell these goods and services to Fairfax County. An understanding of how Fairfax County conducts its business can provide a solid partnership between Fairfax County and its business partners.

Because the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management is the central procurement agency for Fairfax County government, we have included a brief description of the department in the first chapter of the *Guide*. Also included is a summary of the "Electronic Procurement" or "E-Procurement" initiatives that we have implemented with our vendors to better serve our customer base. One of these initiatives is expanding the use of the Internet. Bid announcements, notice of contract awards, and all of the information contained in this *Guide* is only a sampling of the information included on our Internet Web site. I would encourage you to visit our Web site at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm).

We hope this information is useful to you. Should you have any questions or suggestions for improvement, please do not hesitate to contact me at 703-324-3206 or send me an e-mail at [armand.malo@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:armand.malo@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Sincerely,

Armand E. Malo, CPPO  
Director/County Purchasing Agent

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# CHAPTER 1

## DEPARTMENT OF PURCHASING AND SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

### *Overview*

#### *Who We Are...*

The Fairfax County Department of Purchasing and Supply Management provides the county government with overall material management which includes purchasing, non-capital construction (*see Chapter 8*), warehousing, inventory management, and fixed asset accountability. Support is also provided for purchasing and fixed asset accountability for the Fairfax County Public Schools.

#### *Who to Contact...*

❑	Director.....	703-324-3206
❑	Deputy Director.....	703-324-3205
❑	Chief of Administration.....	703-324-2261
❑	Chief, Systems and Customer Services .....	703-324-3256
❑	Procurement Opportunities List Application Requests .....	703-324-4047
❑	Purchasing Staff.....	703-324-3201
❑	Small Business Program Manager.....	703-324-3212
❑	Surplus Property .....	703-658-3706

#### *Purchasing Teams*

The department's Purchasing and Materials Management Branch is composed of two "buying teams." A listing of each team supervisor and buyer is available by viewing our Web site at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/contact.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/contact.htm) or calling the department's Information Specialist on 703-324-3201.

#### *Where We Are Located...*

The Department of Purchasing and Supply Management is located at the Fairfax County Government Center:

12000 Government Center Parkway  
4th Floor, Suite 427  
Fairfax, VA 22035-0013

Main Telephone Number: 703-324-3201  
Main "Fax" Number 703-324-3587  
Internet Web Address: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm)

Directions may be obtained by contacting our Information Specialist at 703-324-3201.

### ***When to Visit...***

Vendors are welcome to visit the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management, Monday through Friday (except county holidays) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. However, to ensure availability of staff, appointments are recommended and may be scheduled by calling 703-324-3201.

### ***E-Procurement Programs***

The Department of Purchasing and Supply Management has been actively implementing “electronic” procurement initiatives to enhance the way we conduct business. The following is a brief summary of the current programs that we have implemented with our business and vendor community. If you are interested in participating in any of these programs or would like more information, please contact our Chief of Systems and Customer Services at 703-324-3256.

#### ***Internet Access...***

- ***Fairfax County Home Page***

There is a wealth of information available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year on the county’s “home page.” Not only is there procurement information, but also other information of interest to the vendor and business community. Some highlights include:

General County Information: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/today/default.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/today/default.htm)

Board of Supervisors: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/board/default.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/board/default.htm)

Employment Opportunities: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/jobs/homepage.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/jobs/homepage.htm)

Vendors without access to the Internet may go to a county library or may visit DPSM where access is available.

- ***Procurement Information Web Page***

The Department of Purchasing and Supply Management Web page is a very good resource for procurement information ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm)). Some of the most commonly accessed areas include:

Listing of Current Solicitations: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/solic.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/solic.htm)

Small Business Information: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/sbp.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/sbp.htm)

Listing of Bid Tabulations: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/bidtab.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/bidtab.htm)

Listing of Contracts: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/contracts.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/contracts.htm)

### ***Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)***

Department of Purchasing and Supply Management has the capability to issue purchase orders electronically to other “EDI-capable” vendors or by fax to non-EDI vendors. For more information about our EDI Program, call 703-324-3268.

### ***Electronic “Notices of Solicitation (NOS)”***

Department of Purchasing and Supply Management has also expanded its e-mail capabilities to automatically notify registered "Procurement Opportunities List" vendors of upcoming procurement opportunities. Once the solicitation package has been approved by the buyer, instead of mailing the NOS, which can take several days, this new program will send you an e-mail with all of the applicable information. If you do not have e-mail capability, we can also mail the document to you.

Vendors who have *e-mail* capability and have *registered* via the Procurement Opportunities List (POL) program can participate in this program by giving us an e-mail address at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/vendormail.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpsm/vendormail.htm).

Need more information? Contact our POL Manager at 703-324-4047.

### ***Online Catalogs/Ordering***

The Department of Purchasing and Supply Management is currently expanding its program of ordering goods through selected vendor's Internet Catalog and Ordering capabilities. Fairfax County is currently using the Internet "online catalog and ordering" capabilities for office supplies, and industrial supplies. If you have this capability or would like more information on this program, please contact our Chief, Systems and Customer Services, at 703-324-3256.

### ***Procurement Card Program***

In lieu of issuing a purchase order, Fairfax County agencies may use a "Procurement Card" for placing orders less than \$2,500. The Procurement Card is similar to a commercial credit card and is currently under contract with *Bank-1-One/MasterCard*. Vendors are encouraged to accept this method of receiving orders. Questions regarding establishing an account with MasterCard should be referred to: MC/MasterCard Merchant Services at 1-800-762-6663.

## Chapter 2 PURCHASING REGULATIONS

The purchasing and contract administration functions of the Fairfax County Department of Purchasing and Supply Management are regulated primarily by the *Code of Virginia* and the *Fairfax County Purchasing Resolution*.

### ***Legal Requirements for Operation of the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management...***

The operation of the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management is conducted primarily under the following County Resolution and Virginia law:

- ❑ ***Fairfax County Purchasing Resolution*** – The *Fairfax County Purchasing Resolution* prescribes the basic policies for the conduct of all purchasing in Fairfax County.
- ❑ ***Virginia Public Procurement Act*** – Title 2.2, Chapter 43 of the *Code of Virginia*, or “*Virginia Public Procurement Act*,” provides the laws governing County purchases of supplies, materials, equipment and contractual services from non-governmental sources. It specifies the methods of procurement, to include bidding and awarding of bids.

Copies may be obtained by calling 703-324-3206.

### **Chapter 3**

## **SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM**

#### ***Getting Assistance...***

Fairfax County has adopted a Small Business Enterprise Program, which has the objective to make every effort to increase the opportunity for utilization of small and minority firms in all aspects of procurement. Vendors are encouraged to participate in the many events that take place throughout the year as well as meet with the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management staff and become better acquainted with county procurement procedures.

Information on the Small Business Enterprise Program may be obtained by contacting our SBE Program Manager at 703-324-3212.



## Chapter 4 HOW TO SELL TO FAIRFAX COUNTY

### ***Vendor Registration***

#### ***The Procurement Opportunities List Application...***

The *Procurement Opportunities List ("POL") Application* is a “registration form” completed by vendors who desire to conduct business with Fairfax County. The Department of Purchasing and Supply Management uses this information as the primary source for issuing "Notices of Solicitation" to these vendors for the specific goods and/or services required. For "formal bids" (i.e., goods or non-professional/consultant services greater than \$50,000, and for professional and consultant services greater than \$30,000), all registered vendors marketing the specific goods or services are sought. For "informal bids" (i.e., less than the above dollar thresholds), vendors are randomly selected from the POL database.

#### ***How to Register...***

All vendors interested in doing business with Fairfax County should register with the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management by submitting a completed *Procurement Opportunities List (POL)* application. Application forms are available by calling 703-324-3201. Upon receipt and approval of the POL (which takes about five days), the POL Manager will:

- 1) Assign a "vendor number" which is either the vendor's *Federal Identification Number* (for businesses) or *Social Security Number* (for individuals), and
- 2) Enter the vendor's POL information into the county's automated POL database.

Once registered, it is the responsibility of the vendor to keep the information up-to-date. Any change requests to your POL records should be mailed to the POL Manager. Due to the magnitude of our database, incidental correspondence and information noted on bids will not be considered as requests for changes.

If you would like additional information regarding the Procurement Opportunities List program, please contact the POL Manager at 703-324-4047.

### ***Visiting Other County Offices***

Vendor sales efforts to a county agency are not prohibited, and are often a result of an agency's request to keep current with the latest "state of the art" technologies, materials, sources of supply, etc. Furnishing sales literature or other product information is considered normal sales effort. However, such requests do not imply that you will receive the agency's order. Depending on a number of conditions, the agency's final

requirement may result in a solicitation being issued by the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management.

Some of our major offices include the Fairfax County Public Schools/Supply Operations (703-658-3749), Park Authority (703-324-8784) and the Department of Vehicle Services (703-324-3591).

### ***Product Demonstrations***

Similar to sales visits, product demonstrations are considered normal sales efforts. Vendors often have a product or service that may be of interest to many agencies within Fairfax County government. In this case, the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management can make arrangements for "product demonstrations" where a number of similar vendor products or services may be demonstrated in one central location (similar to a "product expo"). You should contact the appropriate contract administrator or SBE Program Manager for additional information.

The Department of Purchasing and Supply Management is also a member of several professional associations that sponsor vendor presentations:

The *National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP)* - hosts an "Annual Forum and Products Exposition" where vendors may demonstrate their products/services to a large number of U.S. and Canadian governments. Additional information may be obtained by calling NIGP at 703-736-8900 or e-mail to: [forum@nigp.org](mailto:forum@nigp.org).

The *Virginia Association of Governmental Purchasing (VAGP)* – hosts two conferences a year (spring and fall) that include vendor product demonstrations. For more information about participating in these conferences, you may visit VAGP Web site at <http://vagp.state.va.us>.

## Chapter 5 HOW WE BUY...

### ***Methods of Procurement***

The *Fairfax County Purchasing Resolution* prescribes the basic policies for the conduct of all purchasing in Fairfax County. There are five basic "methods" used to procure goods and services for Fairfax County agencies. A summary of each method follows.

- 1) ***Small Purchases*** are purchases for goods/services where the estimated cost does not exceed \$5,000. Most small "purchases" are delegated to county agencies who will work directly with the vendor in obtaining information such as price, delivery, etc. The "order" will be made by issuance of a "*Small Purchase Order*," or if under \$2,500, using a Fairfax County "Procurement Card."
- 2) ***Informal Bids*** are purchases for goods/services where the estimated cost is either between \$5,000 and \$30,000 (for professional and consultant services) or between \$5,000 and \$50,000 (for goods and non-professional/consultant services). There are two ways to obtain informal bids:
  - a) *Open Market Procurements (OMP)* are written requests for bids mailed to at least 18 vendors. These vendors are selected from the automated Procurement Opportunities List database and comprised of six small businesses, six minority businesses, and six randomly selected vendors. Public bid openings are conducted at the date/time indicated on the OMP form.
  - b) *Telephone/Fax Quotes* are obtained for requirements that are under \$10,000. This method is used primarily by county agencies who will seek quotes from three or more vendors. Final approval of telephone or fax quotes is made by the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management.
- 3) ***Formal Bids*** are purchases for goods or services where the estimated cost is over \$30,000 or \$50,000, as noted above. There are two types of formal competitive procurements used by the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management: an Invitation for Bid, and a Request for Proposal. Each type has specific requirements as outlined in the *Fairfax County Purchasing Resolution*. A summary of these elements follows.
  - a) *Invitation for Bid (IFB)* - An "IFB" or *competitive sealed bid* is a written request for specifically defined goods or services. An example of an IFB would be procuring office supplies. Although vendors do not need to be registered to receive an IFB, vendors who are registered for the particular goods/services will *automatically* be sent a "Notice of Solicitation" (NOS). The NOS is a notice advising you of the

county's current requirement for the goods or services needed. IFBs also are available for downloading from the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management's "Current Solicitations" Web page. There is a public bid opening in which vendor names and bid prices are read (vendors are not required to attend, but are encouraged to do so). After the bid opening, a tabulation of the bids will be prepared and posted on Department of Purchasing and Supply Management's "Bid Tabulation" Web page as well as in the department's public information area.

- b) *Request for Proposal (RFP)* - A "RFP" or *competitive negotiation* is a written request sent to vendors which indicates in general terms the goods or services being procured by Fairfax County. An example of an RFP would be for consulting services. Similar to an IFB, a vendor does not need to be registered to submit a proposal; however, vendors who are registered for the particular goods/services will *automatically* be sent a "Notice of Solicitation" (NOS). Unlike an IFB, there are no "bid openings," and proposals are available for public inspection after the contract is awarded.
- 4) ***Sole Source*** procurements exist when the County Purchasing Agent has determined that there is only one source practicably available. A written record documenting the basis for this determination is posted in the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management public information area.
- 5) ***Emergency*** procurements may be made without competitive sealed bidding or competitive negotiation under an emergency condition. A written determination of the basis for the emergency and for the selection of the particular contractor is posted in the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management public information area.

## ***Cooperative Procurement Program***

### ***Objective...***

The purpose of the cooperative procurement program is to combine requirements from other jurisdictions -- locally and/or nationally -- into one bid document in order to increase efficiency and to reduce administrative expenses. Participating jurisdictions also benefit from this combined "purchasing power" by paying lower costs.

### ***Locally -***

The Department of Purchasing and Supply Management actively participates and, in many cases sponsors, "cooperative procurements" with other local governments which include:

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Cooperative Purchasing Program (202- 962-3222) and,

The State of Virginia/Department of General Services (804-786-3842).

***Nationally -***

The Department of Purchasing and Supply Management is also an Advisory Board member for the national cooperative procurement program managed by the U.S. Communities Purchasing and Finance Agency (800-635-3993) sponsorship from the National Association of Counties (NACo), National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP), National League of Cities (NLC), and the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM).

***Benefits To You...***

Vendors awarded contracts through a cooperative purchasing program also benefit from:

- A single competitively bid issued by one jurisdiction on behalf of multiple public agencies locally or nationwide;
- A reduction in administrative and sales overhead associated with responding to multiple bids from multiple jurisdictions; and
- A "One-Stop-Shop" access to public agencies through the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Cooperative Purchasing Program or U.S. Communities Purchasing and Finance Agency Purchasing Program.

## **Chapter 6**

### **GETTING PAID...INVOICING AND PAYMENTS**

#### ***Submitting Your Invoice...***

An invoice is a statement of charges submitted for goods or services rendered. Invoices must contain the applicable Purchase Order number and the county agency that received the goods or services. Although a specific contract may cite instructions as to submitting invoices, as a general rule invoices should be submitted for each purchase order immediately upon completion of services or shipment of goods. The mailing address for the invoice is noted on each purchase order.

#### ***Getting Paid...***

There are two conditions that need to be met before Fairfax County can make a payment: 1) the goods or services have to be received and accepted, and 2) the vendor has submitted a properly completed invoice.

Should a vendor offer a “prompt payment discount” (i.e., the vendor will provide a percentage discount from the invoice amount if payment is made within a set time frame), time is computed from the date of acceptance of the goods or services, **or**, from the date the correct invoice is received in the office specified on the purchase order (or contract), whichever is later.

#### ***Who to Contact...***

Should you have questions concerning the status of a payment, the first step should be to contact the agency that received your goods or services. If you need further assistance, you may contact the Fairfax County Department of Finance, Accounts Payable, at 703-324-2530.

## **Chapter 7**

### **BUYING SURPLUS COUNTY PROPERTY**

#### ***What is Surplus Property...***

Surplus property is generally defined as tangible property that is no longer of use to any county agency because it is obsolete, uneconomical to repair, or valued only for its base contents. In addition, confiscated and unclaimed property held by the Fairfax County Police Department and not needed by the county is considered surplus property.

#### ***How Surplus Property is Disposed...***

Surplus property is disposed of in the following ways:

- ❑ *Public Auctions.* Auctions are held twice a month. Vehicle auctions are normally scheduled on the first Friday of the month. All other surplus items, including unclaimed confiscated property, boats, and unclaimed bicycles, are sold monthly, but separate from the vehicle auction. Public Auctions are advertised in local newspapers. All items are sold in "as is/where-is" condition, with the purchaser responsible for removal. The county's contract Auctioneer maintains a mailing list for those individuals wishing to receive notification of public auctions.
- ❑ *Sealed Bid Sales.* Sealed bids are conducted for those items that are either too large or bulky, or if it is in the county's best interest to conduct a sealed bid sale. In this case, all bid documents are posted on DPSM Current Solicitations Web page, or you may call 703-324-3201. Vendors may also complete a Procurement Opportunities List (POL) application for automatic notifications.
- ❑ *Salvage Disposal.* Items determined to be of value for their base content only are sold in this manner. Annual contracts are often established by DPSM with scrap vendors for this purpose. Used radiators, scrap metal, oil, paper, etc are the most common type of salvage disposal.

#### ***Who Manages the Surplus Property Program...***

The Department of Purchasing and Supply Management Central Warehouse manages the disposal of all Fairfax County and Fairfax County Public Schools surplus property. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Property Management Supervisor at 703-658-3706.

## **Chapter 8**

### **OTHER COUNTY PROCUREMENT AGENCIES...CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION**

As specified in the *Fairfax County Purchasing Resolution*, the procurement of architectural, engineering and related consultant services for construction projects, and the contracting for construction of capital projects are excluded from the duties of the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management. These functions have been delegated to the following organizations:

- ❑ Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
- ❑ Department of Housing and Community Development
- ❑ Fairfax County Park Authority
- ❑ Fairfax County Public Schools

#### ***What They Do and Who to Contact...***

##### ***Department of Public Works and Environmental Services***

The Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) designs and constructs county facilities such as fire stations, libraries, etc., and utilities such as storm water systems, sanitary sewers, curbs, sidewalks, etc. DPWES does not generally design or construct schools or water utilities.

Construction contract opportunities may be accessed from the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management's Web site under Current Solicitations.

Should you like more information regarding architectural, engineering and construction opportunities with DPWES, contact their main office at:

Department of Public Works and Environmental Services  
12000 Government Center Parkway  
Suite 448  
Fairfax, VA 22035

703-324-5033

##### ***Department of Housing and Community Development***

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) provides the residents of Fairfax County with safe, suitable and more affordable housing with particular emphasis on low - to moderate - income families. DHCD also seeks to



preserve, upgrade and enhance existing neighborhoods through conservation and rehabilitation of housing, and by provision of public facilities and services.

Should you like more information regarding architectural, engineering and construction opportunities with DHCD, contact their main office at:

Department of Housing and Community Development  
3700 Pender Drive  
Fairfax, VA 22030

703-246-5100

### ***Fairfax County Park Authority***

The Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) provides the citizens of Fairfax County with a park system that will meet their needs for a variety of recreational activities and the conservation, preservation, and enjoyment of their natural environment. This involves design and construction of several different types of parks and facilities.

FCPA construction contract opportunities may be accessed from the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management's Web site under Current Solicitations.

Should you like more information regarding architectural, engineering and construction opportunities with FCPA, contact their main office at:

Fairfax County Park Authority  
12055 Government Center Parkway  
Suite 927  
Fairfax, VA 22035

703-324-8578

### ***Fairfax County Public Schools***

The Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Department of Facilities Services, Office of Design and Construction Services designs and constructs school and school-related facilities. Most minor and all major capital improvements are done through contracts.

FCPS construction contract opportunities may be accessed from the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management's Web site under Current Solicitations.

Should you like more information regarding architectural, engineering and construction opportunities with FCPS, contact their main office at:

Fairfax County Public Schools  
Office of Design and Construction  
City Square Building  
10640 Page Avenue  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
703-246-3632

## **Chapter 9**

### **QUESTIONS?**

We hope this *Guide* has answered your questions regarding doing business with Fairfax County government. Should you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management's Information Specialist at 703-324-3201.